

THE COMMONWEAL

[REGISTERED]

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

[TRANSMITTED
REGISTERED]

VOL. I.—No. 1.

FEBRUARY, 1885.

ONE PENNY

INTRODUCTORY.

We beg our readers' leave for a few words in which to introduce to them this Socialist journal, THE COMMONWEAL. In the first place we ask them to understand that the Editor and Sub-Editor of THE COMMONWEAL are acting as delegates of the Socialist League, and under its direct control: any slip in principles, therefore, any mis-statement of its aims or tactics of the League, are liable to correction from the representatives of that body.

As to the conduct of THE COMMONWEAL, it must be remembered that it has one aim—the propagation of Socialism. We shall not, therefore, make any excuses for what may be thought journalistic shortcomings, if we can but manage to attract attention to the study of our principles from those who have not yet thought of Socialism, or who are, as often happens, bitterly hostile to them through ignorance; or if we can help those whose feelings are drawing them towards the cause of the workers, but who need definite instruction as to its aims and methods. To awaken the sluggish, to strengthen the waverers, to instruct the seekers after truth; these are high aims, yet not too high for a journal that claims to be Socialistic, and we hope by patience and zeal to accomplish them.

It is our duty to attack unsparingly the miserable system which would make all civilisation end in a society of rich and poor, of slaves and slave-owners. In all its details we must attack it; but in doing so we shall avoid mere personalities, not for the sake of escaping the accusations of bad taste and bitterness, which doubtless will in any case be flung at us, but because it is illogical to attack those men, monstrous as their position is, who are themselves mere helpless victims in the terrible machine of modern commerce. To attack such persons, unless they put themselves forward as the representatives of the system, implies the belief that the decency or benevolence of their persons would usefully palliate the evils of that system; an implication against which we protest from the outset.

THE COMMONWEAL will only deal with political matters when they directly affect the progress of the Cause. We assume as a matter of course: that a government of privileged persons, hereditary and commercial, cannot act usefully or rightly towards the community; that their position forbids it; their arrangements for the distribution of the plunder of the workers, their struggles for the national share of the exploitation of barbarous peoples are nothing to us except so far as they may give us an opportunity of instilling Socialism into men's minds, or of organizing discontent into Socialism.

We invite from all, Socialists or others, free discussion of anything we put forward, in the belief that even an uninstructed attack will elicit useful information which might otherwise have lain dormant.

Our articles will, for the most part, be of an educational nature: there will be a series on historical revolutions, expositions of the scientific basis of Socialism, and contributions from men of various nationalities.

Lastly, a word of appeal, to the workers chiefly. It is not only that whatever we say is professedly directly in their interest: much more it is through them alone, through the slaves of society, we look for the regeneration, for its elevation from its present corruption and degradation. We cannot pretend to think that they, the workers, as yet know much of the principles of the cause that rests upon them, of their own cause, in fact. We beseech them to help us in spreading our knowledge of those principles amongst their fellows, that as we believe they will now find us honest, so their support may make us resolute, patient, and hopeful—in a word, successful in our efforts for the advancement of the cause we have at heart.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

THE MANIFESTO OF THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE

FELLOW CITIZENS,

We come before you as a body advocating the principles of Revolutionary International Socialism; that is, we seek a change in the basis of Society—a change which would destroy the distinctions of classes and nationalities.

As the civilised world is at present constituted, there are two classes of Society—the one possessing wealth and the instruments of its production, the other producing wealth by means of those instruments but only by the leave and for the use of the possessing classes,

These two classes are necessarily in antagonism to one another. The possessing class, or non-producers, can only live as a class on the unpaid labour of the producers—the more unpaid labour they wring out of them, the richer they will be; therefore the producing class—the workers—are driven to strive to better themselves at the expense of the possessing class, and the conflict between the two is ceaseless. Sometimes it takes the form of open rebellion, sometimes of strikes, sometimes of mere widespread mendicancy and crime; but it is always going on in one form or other, though it may not always be obvious to the thoughtless looker-on.

We have spoken of unpaid labour; it is necessary to explain what that means. The sole possession of the producing class is the power of labour inherent in their bodies; but since, as we have already said, the rich classes possess all the instruments of labour, that is, the land, capital, and machinery, the producers or workers are forced to sell their sole possession, the power of labour, on such terms as the possessing class will grant them.

These terms are, that after they have produced enough to keep them in woking order, and enable them to beget children to take their places when they are worn out, the surplus of their products shall belong to the possessors of property, which bargain is based on the fact that every man working in a civilised community can produce more than he needs for his own sustenance.

This relation of the possessing class to the working class is the essential basis of the system of producing for a profit, on which our modern Society is founded. The way in which it works is as follows: The manufacturer produces to sell at a profit to the broker or factor who in his turn makes a profit out of his dealings with the merchant who again sells for a profit to the retailer, who must make his profit out of the general public, aided by various degrees of fraud and adulteration and the ignorance of the value and quality of goods to which this system has reduced the consumer.

The profit-grinding system is maintained by competition, or veiled war, not only between the conflicting classes, but also within the classes themselves: there is always war among the workers for bare subsistence, and among their masters, the employers and middle-men, for the share of the profit wrung out of the workers; lastly, there is competition—always, and sometimes open war, among the nations of the civilised world for their share of the world-market. For now, indeed, all the rivalries of nations have been reduced to this one grinding struggle for their share of the spoils of barbarous countries, pursued at home for the purpose of increasing the riches of the one and the poverty of the poor.

For, owing to the fact that goods are made primarily to sell, and only secondarily for use, labour is wasted on all hands; since the pursuit of profit compels the manufacturer competing with his fellows to force his wares on the markets by means of their cheapness, whether there is any real demand for them or not. In the words of the Communist Manifesto of 1847:—

“Cheap goods are their artillery for battering down Chinese walls and for opening the obstinate hatred entertained against foreign by smaller nations: under penalty of ruin the Bourgeoisie

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...by competition the universal adoption of their system of... they force all nations to accept what is called civilisation... become Bourgeois—and thus the middle-class shapes the world... own image."

Moreover, the whole method of distribution under this system is... waste; for it employs whole armies of clerks, travellers, shop... advertisers, and what not, merely for the sake of shifting money... one person's pocket to another's; and this waste in production... waste in distribution, added to the maintenance of the useless lives... the possessing and non-producing class, must all be paid for out of... products of the workers, and is a ceaseless burden on their lives.

Therefore the necessary results of this so-called civilisation are only... obvious in the lives of its slaves, the working-class—in the anxiety... want of leisure amidst which they toil, in the squalor and... in those parts of our great towns where they dwell; in... degradation of their bodies, their wretched health, and the shortness... their lives; in the terrible brutality so common among them, and... which is indeed but the reflection of the cynical selfishness found... among the well-to-do classes, a brutality as hideous as the other; and... in the crowd of criminals who are as much manufactures of our... commercial system as the cheap and nasty wares which are made at... for the consumption and the enslavement of the poor.

What remedy, then, do we propose for this failure of our civilisation, which is now admitted by almost all thoughtful people?

We have already shown that the workers, although they produce... the wealth of society, have no control over its production or distri... tion: the people, who are the only really organic part of society, are... treated as a mere appendage to capital—as a part of its machinery. This must be altered from the foundation: the land, the capital, the machinery, factories, workshops, stores, means of transit, mines, banking, all means of production and distribution of wealth, must be declared and treated as the common property of all. Every man will then receive the full value of his labour, without deduction for the profit of a master, and as all will have to work, and the waste now incurred by the pursuit of profit will be at an end, the amount of labour necessary for every individual to produce in order to carry on the essential work of the world will be reduced to something like two or three hours daily; so that every man will have abundant leisure for following intellectual... which is congenial to his nature.

...the method of production, and distribution would... to live decently, and free from the sordid anxieties for... which at present weigh so heavily on the greater part of mankind.

But, moreover, men's social and moral relations would be seriously modified by this gain of economical freedom, and by the collapse of the superstitions, moral and other, which necessarily accompany a state of economical slavery: the test of duty would now rest on the fulfilment of clear and well-defined obligations to the community rather than on the moulding of the individual character and actions to some pre-conceived standard outside social responsibilities.

Our modern bourgeois property-marriage, maintained as it is by its necessary complement, universal venal prostitution, would give place to healthy and human relations between the sexes.

Education freed from the trammels of commercialism on the one hand and superstition on the other, would become a reasonable drawing out of men's varied faculties in order to fit them for a life of social intercourse and happiness; for mere work would no longer be proposed as the end of life, but happiness for each and all.

Only by such fundamental changes in the life of man, only by the transformation of Civilisation into Socialism, can those miseries of the world before-mentioned be remedied.

As to mere politics, Absolutism, Constitutionalism, Republicanism, have all been tried in our day and under our present social system, and all have alike failed in dealing with the real evils of life.

There, on the other hand, will certain incomplete enemies of social reform now before the public solve the question.

Co-operation so-called—that is, competitive co-operation for profit—would merely increase the number of small joint-stock capitalists, under the mask of creating an aristocracy of labour, while it would intensify the severity of labour by its temptations to overwork.

Nationalisation of the land alone, which many earnest and sincere people are now preaching, would be useless so long as labour was subjected to the fleecing of surplus value inevitable under the Capitalist system.

The better solution would be that State Socialism, by whatever name it might be called, whose aim it would be to make concessions to the workers while leaving the present system of capital and wages unaltered; no number of merely administrative changes, until

the workers are in possession of all political power, would make any real approach to Socialism.

The Socialist League therefore aims at the realisation of complete Revolutionary Socialism, and well knows that this can never happen in any one country without the help of the workers of all civilisations. For us neither geographical boundaries, political history, race, nor creed makes rivals or enemies; for us there are no nation but only varied masses of workers and friends, whose mutual sympathies are checked or perverted by groups of masters and fleecers who are interested in it to stir up rivalries and hatreds between the dwellers in different lands.

It is clear that for all these oppressed and cheated masses of workers and their masters a great change is preparing: the dominant classes are uneasy, anxious, touched in conscience even, as to the condition of those they govern; the markets of the world are being competed with an eagerness never before known; everything points to the fact that the great commercial system is becoming unmanageable, and is slipping from the grasp of its present rulers.

The one change possible out of all this is Socialism. As chattel slavery passed into serfdom, and serfdom into the so-called free-labour system, so most surely will this latter pass into social order.

To the realisation of this change the Socialist League addresses itself with all earnestness. As a means thereto it will do all in its power towards the education of the people in the principles of this great cause, and will strive to organise those who will accept this education, so that when the crisis comes, which the march of events is preparing, there may be a body of men ready to step into their due places and deal with and direct the irresistible movement.

Close fellowship with each other, and steady purpose for the advancement of the Cause, will naturally bring about the organisation and discipline amongst ourselves absolutely necessary to success; but we shall look to it that there shall be no distinctions of rank or dignity amongst us to give opportunities for the selfish ambition of leadership which has so often injured the cause of the workers. We are working for equality and brotherhood for all the world, and it is only through equality and brotherhood that we can make our work effective.

Let us all strive, then, towards this end of realising the social order towards social order, the only cause worthy the attention of the workers of all that are proffered to them: let us work in that cause patiently, yet hopefully, and not shrink from making sacrifices to it. Industry in learning its principles, industry in teaching them, are most necessary to our progress; but to these we must add, if we wish to avoid speedy failure, frankness and fraternal trust in each other, and single-hearted devotion to the religion of Socialism, the only religion which the Socialist League professes.

Signatures of the Provisional Council of the Socialist League.

- W. B. ADAMS.
- EDWARD AVELING.
- ELEANOR GARY.
- ROBERT BANNER.
- E. BELSFORT BAX.
- THOMAS BINNING.
- E. CHARLES.
- WILLIAM J. CLARK.
- J. COOPER.
- E. T. CRAIG.
- CHARLES J. FAULKNER.
- W. HUDSON.
- FRANK KITZ.
- JOSEPH LANE.
- FREDERIC LESSNER.
- THOMAS MAGUIRE (Leeds).
- J. L. MAHON.
- S. MAINWARING.
- JAMES MAVOR (Glasgow).
- WILLIAM MORRIS.
- C. MOWBRAY.
- ANDREAS SCHEU (Edinburgh).
- EDWARD WATSON.

IMPERIALISM v. SOCIALISM.

We seem at the present time to have arrived at the acute stage of the colonial fever which during the past three or four years has afflicted the various powers of Europe. Germany is vying with France, England with both, in the haste to seize upon "unoccupied" countries and to establish "protectorates"—the cant diplomatic for income annexation—over uncivilised peoples. "The rivalry among the nations for their share of the world market" (to quote the words of our *festi*) must now, one would think, have discovered itself to the casual newspaper reader as the only meaning the "diplomacy" and "foreign policy" any longer possess. Jealousy between the courts of Europe, once the sole and recently the main cause of national enmity and war, has in our day been superseded by the jealousy between the great capitalists of various nationalities. The flunkey-patriot, zealous of his own honour, dances as readily to-day to the pipe of capitalist greed as he did before to that of royal intrigue, let it but sound the note of hatred. In both cases he makes the running for the

parties. But where the interested party is the wealthiest and most powerful class, able to pay for "patriotic" articles by the yard, and "patriotic" speeches by the hour, "patriotism" is apt to assume the form of a chronic endemic. Such it is to-day, and as such, mocks the futile efforts of the well-meaning but singularly ingenuous clique of middle-class philanthropists, who are naive enough to take the governmental ring at its word when it pretends its only object in undertaking "expeditions" to be the rescue of "Christian heroes" or the relief of garrisons, which have no right to be in a position to want relieving. War, jingoism—otherwise patriotism—are indeed past cure while the economic basis of society remains unchanged, but only so far; and hence we call on all sincere friends of peace to leave their tinkering "peace societies" and join our Socialist League, remembering that all commercial wars—and what modern wars are not directly or indirectly commercial?—are the necessary outcome of the dominant civilisation. We conjure them to reflect that such wars must necessarily increase in proportion to the concentration of capital in private hands—i.e., in proportion as the commercial activity of the world is intensified, and the need for markets becomes more pressing. Markets, markets, markets! Who shall deny that this is the drone-bass ever welling up from beneath the shrill bawling of "pioneers of civilisation," "avengers of national honour," "purveyors of gospel light," "restorers of order;" in short, beneath the hundred and one cuckoo cries with which the "market classes" seek to smother it or to vary its monotony? It seems well-nigh impossible there can be men so blind as not to see through these sickening hypocrites of the governing classes, so thin as they are.

But we would, above all, earnestly urge the workers in future to consider "patriotism" from this point of view. The end of all foreign policy, as of colonial extension, is to provide fields for the relief of native surplus capital and merchandise, and to keep out the foreigner. But how, we ask, does this benefit the workers at the best? They are allowed, may be, the privilege of being shipped across the seas, there to help to make the capitalist and land-grabber rich. Some few here and there may, indeed, succeed, in a colony which is quite new, in becoming wealthy exploiters in their turn. But the immense majority remain wage-slaves as before. In proportion to the advancing prosperity of the colony—as prosperity is conceived in the world of to-day—is its increasing poverty. Sydney, Melbourne, San Francisco, Chicago, and the leading Australian and new American cities generally, exhibit precisely the same conditions as the cities of the Old World. And how can it be otherwise, since the same causes are at work? To crown dependencies like India, which are held unblushingly as magazines for aristocratic and middle classes to plunder at their will, it is only necessary to barely allude in a socialist journal.

This, then, is the empire which the blood and sinew of our workers are squandered to maintain and extend. With room enough and to spare in the British Islands for all their inhabitants to live a comfortable life, ever fresh lands are sought for exploitation, ever new populations for pillage. It matters not even that colonies already established could accommodate more than a hundred times their present inhabitants; still the vampire Imperialism sucks in fresh territory year by year. Populations to rob and enslave; markets to shoot bad fares into; lands to invest capital upon: to obtain these is the be-all and end-all of modern statesmanship. For this has the stock-jobbers' republic of France waged war successively on Tunis, Madagascar, Tonquin, and China; for this does the congress sit at Berlin, partitioning the plunder of Central Africa in advance; for this does the ark seize Angra Pequena, New Ireland, and Samoa; for this the chau fanatic and heroic restorer of corrupt Chinese despotism reluctantly (?) consents to go to Khartoum on a pacific mission, collects a body of adventurers on his arrival, proceeds to attack the surrounding tribes, and then howls for British troops to protect him; for this, lastly, is Lord Wolseley sent with an expedition in response up the Nile. And now a word as to the attitude of socialists towards the imperial question. For the socialist the word frontier does not exist; for his love of country, as such, is no nobler sentiment than love of class. The blustering "patriot," big with England's glory, is precisely on a level with the bloated plutocrat, proud to belong to that great "middle class," which he assures you is "the backbone of the nation." Race-pride and class-pride are, from the standpoint of socialism, involved in the same condemnation. The establishment of socialism, therefore, on any national or race basis is out of the question. Tall talk about the "Anglo-Saxon race," or "the great democracies of English-speaking peoples, in union with the more ancient democracy of England," by combination and determined effort securing for themselves "the leadership in the social changes and reforms (sic) which are close at hand," can but disgust the socialist who is at once logical and honest.

No, the foreign policy of the great internationalist socialist party must be to break up these hideous race monopolies called empires, beginning in each case at home. Hence everything which tends to the disruption and disintegration of the empire to which he belongs must be welcomed by the socialist as an ally. It is his duty to urge on any movement tending in any way to dislocate the commercial relations of the world, knowing that every shock the complex commercial system suffers weakens it and brings its end nearer. This is the negative side of the foreign policy of socialism. The positive is embraced in a single sentence: to consolidate the union of the several national sections on the basis of firm friendship, steadfast adherence to definite principle, and determination to present a solid front to the enemy.

E. BELFORT BAX.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

When a cause or a man is caricatured, there is hope for the cause or the man. Our cause has made enough stir in the stagnant and noisome pool of modern society to have reached even *Punch*. Nearly half a column of that decorously-dull periodical (Jan. 19th) containing one lonely joke, is devoted to the unconscious propagation of our principles.

The same number contains a picture of the "middle-man who is sucking the life out of the hare"—what think you? The hare? The proletariat? Nay, truly. The hare Free Trade. Think of the imagery, workers!

If *Mr. Punch* could read the signs of any other Times than that of Printing House Square, he would make his worn-out hare, the Worker, run to death by the greyhound Capital; for his middle-man whose foot rests on Profit, he would have Society itself; and the hare, sun, labelled Trade, would be the sun of International Organisation of the working classes.

Two prizes of £5 each have been offered for competition (loathsomely word!) among the students of the classes under the University Settlement Scheme at Toynbee Hall, Cambridge Street, E. One is for an Essay on Sir Thomas More. The other is on "The Possibilities of Productive Co-operation as a Solution of the Labour Question." Among the books recommended to the competitors for the latter Sedley Taylor's "Profit Sharing," Henry George's "Progress and Poverty," Ferdinand Lassalle's "Working Men's Programme," Robert Owen's Report.

"An anthropologist," writing in the *Pall Mall*, passes forward the view arrived at, he states, after a wide study of the habits and constitution of aboriginal races, that the cause of the decadence and extinction of such races lies not so much in zymotic diseases or alcohol as in the unnatural clothing forced upon them by the missionary and trader. An earnest appeal is made in this connexion on behalf of the Papuan, an appeal which we fear has little chance against the laws of commercial greed and swindling which form "civilisation." The cruelty which forces tropical and sub-tropical races to sheathe themselves in European "shoddy," as the "anthropologist" himself admits, is the necessary outcome of the "opening up" of their lands to that commercial enterprise of which the missionary is but the "religious exponent."

Among this month's "protectors," is one over the coast-land of Pondoland. The *Times* is not like it. They are ever, assured by the leading Liberal organ that the English Government is acting quite within its rights; that a "protectorate" necessarily means annexation, &c., &c. The project was one of the nears of so many "civilisers and Christianisers" of savages of all times and of all countries. It is now adopted by the Government which has hitherto professed a lofty superiority to such ideas.

"Self-supporting Penny Dinners" is one of the latest contradictions in which our middle-class philanthropists are indulging. The report of the meetings of a few of these "friends" of the poor on January 19th is sorry reading. "No unusual distress," cry some of them, without a word of comment on the frightful condition of things that makes the distress existing "usual." "Distress decidedly greater than usual," whisper others.

There is a desire to keep out the pauperising element, of course, and, equally of course, and far more logically, a tendency to "convert the penny dinners into meals provided gratis." The "desire" apparently is that of the philanthropists. The "tendency" is that of social evolution.

Of course all this is done in the interest of the poor themselves. The exploited classes, whilst declining to give the exploited capital, show interest in them.

After all this report on the lines of that essentially bourgeois institution, the Charitable Organisation Society, it is refreshing to hear that a conference on "How to Improve the Condition of the Poor" was held at Clerkenwell on January 20th. Resolutions strongly condemning the actions of the Society, whose name is its condemnation, were passed.

"Fluctuations of Trade" is a fluid sort of phrase that covers a multitude of ignorances. This is, according to the capitalistic press, the phrase in explanation of the distress that is now stalking through the land.

Yet for a word of warning from the user of this phrase we should be grateful. To say that the perennial distress, with its occasional exacerbations, is even temporarily remediable by the Government finding work for the people, is to mislead.

"If the Socialistic dream is ever to be realised, it must be established by such a complete re-organisation of society as can only be achieved by a long and laborious process."—*Weekly Dispatch*, Jan. 19th.

(Continued on page 6.)

THE COMMONWEAL.

February, 1885.

Literary communications should be addressed to the Editor of THE COMMONWEAL, 27, Farringdon Street, E.C. They must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication.

Rejected MSS. can only be returned if a stamped directed envelope forwarded with them.

All business communications to be addressed to the Secretary of the Socialist League, 27, Farringdon Street, E.C.

Subscriptions for THE COMMONWEAL, free by post: For 12 months, 1s. 6d.; 4 copies, 5s. 6d.; 8 copies, 10s. 6d.; 13 copies, 15s. Six dozen of the first number, for distribution, will be sent post free.

Amongst those who have already promised to contribute to THE COMMONWEAL are the following: William Morris, E. Belfort Bax, E. T. S. Stepniak, W. Sharman, Edward Aveling, Andreas Scheu, J. L. Mahon, C. Mowbray, Friedrich Engels, Wilhelm Liebknecht, C. Faulkner, Eleanor Marx Aveling, Paul Lafargue.

List of weekly subscribers already promised: W. B. Adams, J. Banner, William Morris, Edward Aveling, Eleanor Aveling, F. S. Fenner, J. L. Mahon, H. Charles, E. B. Bax, W. J. Clark, S. Mainwaring, T. Gabriel, Edward Watson, Mrs. Morris, May Morris.

This journal can be obtained at 27, Farringdon Street, E.C. (offices of the Socialist League); Progressive Publishing Company, 28, Stone-ter Street, E.C.; Edward Truelove, 256, High Holborn, W.C.; Thought Publishing Company, 63, Fleet Street, E.C.; Cattell and Co., 84, Fleet Street.

THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

All who accept the principles stated in the Manifesto on pages 1 and 2, are asked to communicate with the Secretary, J. L. Mahon, 27, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.

The manner and terms of admission to the League are given in the Manifesto on pages 1 and 2.

The manner and terms of admission to the League are given in the Manifesto on pages 1 and 2. We therefore ask all those who can do so to show their interest in the cause by subscribing sums, however small, weekly towards our expenses. Subscriptions will be acknowledged in THE COMMONWEAL, but initials only can be given if desired.

The following have already promised to subscribe regularly every week: J. Lane, S. Mainwaring, O. Lloyd, C. J. Faulkner, William H. Sparling, Edward Aveling, Eleanor Aveling, W. J. Clark, J. Banner, J. Davies, E. B. Bax, Joseph Lane, Friedrich Lessner, J. L. Mahon, Ed. Watson, A. Brown, Mrs. Morris, May Morris, Charles.

Financial correspondents will please forward copies of Papers which may be of interest referring to the movement.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

OSCAR EINSGARTEN.—Glad to hear of your efforts on behalf of the journal in advance. The leaders of the German Socialists will contribute to our columns.

W. SHARMAN.—It is certainly the hope of the Provisional Council of the Socialist League that their journal will preach what you call "the pure doctrine." Thanks for your promise to send twelve copies of each issue. If our more fortunate friends can follow that example, and distribute the journal among the less fortunate, we shall be glad to see it.

HENRY M. WALKER.—Thanks for casting. The Provisional Council will be obliged to you and to all other friends who will send newspaper or other notice in the public press to the Editor of THE COMMONWEAL.

EVAN C. NEWMAN.—THE COMMONWEAL can be obtained from the offices of the League, and from other places; see above.

E. EWING (Manchester).—As our Branches are only just beginning to form, we have not yet one in Manchester. Can you help in the formation of one? Citizen Darbishire, 116, Lower Brompton Road, will be of great use in any such undertaking.

F. SUGDEN.—We forward you two copies of the first number. The terms of subscription are given above.

W. WASHINGTON.—See answer to T. Bax above. His address is 37, Rydal Mount, Cheetham Hill; the other address was in 55, Gosport Street, Russell Square, London.

K. DONALD.—The Provisional Council have decided not to make the alterations suggested by your Branch in regard to the Manifesto.

HENRY WALKER.—We hope and believe the Hammersmith friends will be among our strongest Branches.

O. LLOYD.—Whilst it is useful to order your copies of THE COMMONWEAL directly from the office, inasmuch as then the League gets the full price of the subscription, it must be remembered that ordering through the bookseller will show a bill of the journal, is a better advertisement.

THE MARCH OF THE WORKERS.

To the tune of "John Brown."

WHAT is this, the sound and rumour? What is this that all men hear?
Like the wind in hollow valleys when the storm is drawing near,
Like the rolling on of ocean in the eventide of fear?

'Tis the people marching on.

Whither go they, and whence come they? What are these of whom we hear?
Tell!

In what country are they dwelling 'twixt the gates of heaven and hell?
Are they mine or thine for money? Will they serve a master well?

Still the rumour's marching on.

Chorus—Hark the rolling of the thunder!

Lo the sun! and lo, thereunder

Riseth wrath, and hope, and wonder,

And the host comes marching on.

Forth they come from grief and torment; on they march, with health
and mirth,

All the wide world is their dwelling, every corner of the earth
Buy them, sell them for thy service! Try the bargain, 'tis worth,

For the days are marching on.

These are they who build thy houses, weave thy raiment, win thy wheat,
Smooth the rugged, fill the barren, turn the bitter into sweet,

What reward for them is meet?

Till the host comes marching on.

Chorus—Hark the rolling, &c.

Many a hundred years, passed over, have they laboured deaf and dumb;
blind;

Never tidings reached their sorrow, never hope their toil might find.

Now at last they've heard and hear it, and their cry comes down the
wind,

And their feet are marching on.

O ye rich men, hear and tremble! for with words the sound is rife:

"Once for you and death we laboured; changed henceforward is the
strife.

We are men, and we shall battle for the world of men and life;

And our host is marching on."

Chorus—Hark the rolling, &c.

"Is it war, then? Will ye perish as the dry wood in the fire?
Is it peace? Then be ye of us, let your hope be our desire.

Come and live! for life awaketh, and the world shall never
And hope is marching on.

"On we march then, we the workers, and the rumour that we hear
Is the blended sound of battle and deliv'rance drawing near.

For the hope of every creature is the banner that we bear."

And the world is marching on.

Chorus—Hark the rolling, &c.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

ENGLISH SOCIALISM AND THE "WEEKLY DISPATCH"

The *Weekly Dispatch* a paper that is certainly not wholly devoted to the interests of the State, had in its issue of January 11 a leader on Socialism. The article is apparently written by a leader on the paper, and is familiar as almost to breed contempt—embodied in the ancient Latin phrase "*lucus a non lucendo*." The article is as foolish as its writer is ignorant of the meaning of Socialism. The writer knows little, if anything, of Socialism, as is shown by his use of the "big words and the tone of mysterious importance" always adopted by a Socialist. Whenever the writer or any one else writes in any language using big words or afflicted with a tone "of mysterious importance," he may be sure that he has not met a Socialist. Big words are foolish if they are not endorsed by large numbers, and unnecessary if they are thus endorsed.

As the *Weekly Dispatch* writer does not know our principles, his reference as to the "actual work" done is as natural as it is complete. He has evidently read not a line of any of the standard works on Socialism. It is doubtful if he has even skimmed airily through a chapter or two. Such papers as the *Sozial-Demokrat*, the *Neue Volkszeitung*, *Recht vor Allen*, probably never meet his eye. It would be interesting to know his views on the recent elections in many, and the number of open-air East-End meetings he has attended—as interesting as the study of any other non-existent quality is to mathematicians.

It may be fair, as the leader-writer hath it, to take the manifesto published in *To-Day* of January as typical of Socialist views. It would be fairer, in our opinion, if we may trouble our critic to read as many as two articles, were he to take "for a taste" the manifesto issued in the journal. In it, to note but a single point, he will find that State regulated labour and distribution are not, in Socialistic ideas, labour distribution regulated by the State as it is to-day. "The State" will be as changed from what it now is and is not as events will be. The idea will come with a shock to our article-writer, who is clearly no evolutionist. For he talks of "the probable course of events continuing along the old lines." Were he an evolutionist, he might be asked here is any domain of Nature in which things do continue "along old lines." Not being an evolutionist, he might seriously maintain that the principle which governs alike the origin of worlds and the life of a flower, does not hold in sociology.

"Extreme poverty" is sometimes caused by idleness, intemperance, and profligacy. Sometimes also by the greed of rich employers, unjust legislation, fluctuations of trade. We should be grateful for that.

Even a writer in the capitalistic press should know, nay, does know, that one of the six phrases used here is the mother of the rest, and a swarm of other expressions. "The greed of rich employers," "the lust for surplus-labour, is the parent of the whole spawn."

Take also, the true capitalistic whine, not without its note of falsehood. "The rich being compelled to empty their pockets for the maintenance of the poor." Not a word as to the emptying to-day, not a word as to the emptying by the workers for the maintenance of the poor and upper classes; no word as to the means by which to-day the pockets have been filled; no word as to the honest work to be done in the future by all not incapacitated by physical weakness or idleness; no word as to the obliteration in the future of the distinctions now warping and marring the life of man, and the meaning of those very hideous words "rich" and "poor."

—is it, alas! or well a day?—at length we are in accord with our Socialist friends. "We believe that co-operation amongst the labourers and industrial education will go far." Socialists believe these will go further than the *Weekly Dispatch* even dreams, and not fare worse. Co-operation amongst labourers—truly. But not for profit—for justice. Education—so. Not that they may be the better tools for the capitalist, but that they may understand who and what they are, who and what their nature the capitalist is. Our accord is but brief. In the same sentence as "co-operation and education," we have "poor laws" and "charities." When once the means of production are in the hands of the producers, and the producers are the whole community, poor laws and charities will have vanished with the rest of the offspring of capital.

The objectless objections are once again wearily revived. "How will we force men to save capital?" But capital is a means of production, and as such can never be the property of the individual, but the property of the community. "How will the labourers be persuaded to work, if they cross their legs and talk Socialism, &c." The host of our lost sight of here! Note one or two only. Labour will not then be a burden it is, but the joy it should be. Crossing the legs is only a means of saving the energies have been in action. Talking Socialism then be like counting the number of respirations one makes per minute now. And the writer forgets that we exempt from our production as a nation, not only the sick, but the criminal, whose crime is the production, for whom and his fellows, ever diminishing in numbers, for long time restriction will be needed.

Our article-writer wants a guarantee that the best goods are to be had at the lowest prices, and with a delicious unconsciousness opens up the infinite vistas of adulteration under the present system. Hereupon he sings his monotonous chant of individual freedom. The artisan may now choose his favourite amusements as taste dictates. And why, in the name of man, may he not under the present régime? Under this, the only differences will be, that not only the artisan of to-day, but the millions lower than he (save the mark!) will also be in a position to choose, and that the "taste" that is to be had will be heightened.

"The schools, theatres," and the like are "to be supplied by the Government." Truly. But not the Government as it is now, but the Government that ever more ought not to be—a group of non-producers. And why outcries against this arrangement in a paper that has been a persistent and inconsistent supporter of Board schools from the outset?

The lofty conception that our critic has of his fellows, on the one hand, and the principle, it is to be feared, is evidenced by one charming sentence. "The highest ambition of a citizen will be to talk the loudest and the longest in the public assembly, and his daily endeavour will be to grab his share of the national wealth while escaping the observation of the national overseer." He is, as so many do, reading into the conditions that are coming the competition-spirit and dishonesty that are the natural outcome of the conditions now existent, and that will die with these.

The last paragraph is not without its sneer. In reply to that let me say two things as I end: (1) The League has already taken very definite shape, and is daily enrolling members and forming branches; (2) That which we call "with unintentional sarcasm scientific Socialism" does actually exist. In evidence of this, the Socialist League had the honour to forward to the writer of the article on English Socialism in the *Weekly Dispatch* a ticket of admission to the Lecture to be given at South Place Institute. They will be an attempt to put down a part, and only a part, of the scientific basis of our belief.

EDWARD AVELING.

LESSONS IN SOCIALISM.

Two Courses of Eight Lessons each, on "Capital," will be given at South Place Institute, Moorgate Street, under the auspices of the Socialist League. In these an attempt will be made to give an analysis of Karl Marx' *Das Kapital*.

SYLLABUS OF FIRST COURSE.

Lesson 1.—Thursday, Feb. 12, 1885.—Matter. Motion. Nature. Product. Commodity. Use-value. Exchange-value. Relative and equivalent forms. Accidental and rare exchange. Barter. General equivalent. Money. Price.

Lesson 2.—Thursday, Feb. 19.—Circulation of commodities as a measure of value. As a standard of price. As a means of circulation. The metamorphosis of commodities. Money. Paper-money. Thesaurisation. Universal money.

Lesson 3.—Thursday, Feb. 26.—The circulation of money and capital. C—M—C' (formula for simple circulation of commodities). M—C—M' (general formula for capital). Comparison of the two formulae. $M' = M + \Delta M$. $\Delta M =$ surplus-value. Capital. Difficulties. The exceptional commodity needed. This commodity is labour-power. Labour. The labourer. Means of subsistence.

Lesson 4.—Thursday, March 5.—Labour-process. Primitive objects. Raw material. Means of labour. Means of production. Consumption. Result of labour. Capitalist and labourer. Labour preserves and creates value. Use-value and value of means of production. Surplus-value again. Constant and variable capital. Surplus-product. Surplus-labour.

Lesson 5.—Thursday, March 12.—The working-day. Its limits. The lust for surplus-labour. English industries under no limitation as to the length of the working-day. Day and night work. Relay system. The struggle between capitalists and labourers up to the end of the seventeenth century. Compulsory limitation. Factory Acts, 1833-64. Effect of English legislation on other countries. Rate of surplus-value.

Lesson 6.—Thursday, March 19.—Necessary labour-time. Surplus labour-time. Absolute surplus-value. Relative surplus-value. Co-operation. Early forms. Capitalistic form. Manufacture. The piece-worker. Heterogeneous manufacture. Serial manufacture. Comparison. Capitalistic character of manufacture.

Lesson 7.—Thursday, March 26.—Definition of machine. Motor, transmitter, tool. Heterogeneous machinery. Serial machinery. Effect on the product; on the labourer. Lengthening of working-day. Intensification of labour. Factories. The Grand industry and agriculture. Factory legislation.

Lesson 8.—Thursday, April 2.—Recapitulation of the subject-matter dealt with in the preceding lessons.

The Second Course of Eight Lessons will commence on Thursday, April 16. They will deal with the production of absolute and of relative surplus-value. Wages. Accumulation. The abstinence theory. Over-population. Expropriation and exploitation. The farmer capitalist. The industrial capitalist. The colonial system.

The lessons will be given by Edward Aveling, Fellow of Univ. Coll., Lond.

On Saturday, Feb. 7, a Public Meeting will be held at South Place Institute, at 8.30 P.M., to explain the objects of the lessons. William Morris, J. L. Mallon, Edward Aveling, S. Mainwaring, C. Mowbray, Joseph Lane, and others will speak.

Lectures free to members of the Socialist League; non-members, 3s. per course of eight lessons; 6d. one lesson. Apply to Edward Watson, 27, Farringdon St. to get.

All receipts, a help of the League, go to the Secretary, whom he can be reached but just previously called.

